

# **MASTER PLAN REVIEW**

## **LUNENBURG PLANNING BOARD**

**MAY 2008**

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There are four phase in the CWMP process regulated by the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) *Guide to Comprehensive Wastewater Planning*.

Phase I: Assessment of existing conditions, projection of future wastewater disposal requirement and a needs assessment for the Town.

Phase II: Identify and short list appropriate means of handling the wastewater management methods to address the areas identified in Phase I.

Phase III: Detailed evaluation of alternatives identified and short-listed in Phase II and a recommendation of a specific wastewater management plan for each area.

Phase IV: Finalize specific wastewater management plan for each area.

*The CWMP will determine whether or not conventional on-site Title 5 septic systems are providing adequate means of sanitation, environmental protection, and growth management within the Town today and through the 20-year planning period.*

The Study includes an evaluative analysis of the short-listed wastewater alternatives. The evaluation considered 14 environmental and economic factors which are:

1. treatment levels
2. wastewater effluent quality and nutrient removal
3. drinking water quality
4. ability to retain water in watersheds
5. wetlands-flood plain and agricultural impacts
6. effects on endangered and protected species
7. solid/hazardous water generation
8. odors/ air quality/ noise impacts
9. open space-recreation
10. surface water impacts
11. growth and development consideration
12. community character
13. capital cost
14. operation and maintenance cost

Key points in the study included different collection systems, wastewater management techniques, and wastewater effluent disposal management which include Lake Shirley and Hickory Hills.

Recommendations include alternatives to Leominster and Fitchburg.

At the time of this writing, recommendations are to develop a plan to achieve the best suited, feasible alternative for each identified needs area. The recommendations may include creating and managing a sewer district management plan, a septic management plan, and implementing decentralized wastewater treatment and regional wastewater treatment facilities at the Fitchburg East and Leominster wastewater treatment facilities.

*Summary: At the time of this writing, the CWMP is still ongoing. Full reports will be given by the Sewer Commission. The purpose of this writing is to update the Master Plan work with the status of Sewer Implementation and to report the same to the Community.*

## Construction and Renovation for School Needs

The Primary School was constructed at 1401 Massachusetts Avenue and opened in August 2005.

### New Status:

In April 2007, the Lunenburg Public Schools adopted a *School Facilities Master Plan* that was conducted with a High School Feasibility Study by Drummey, Roasanne, Anderson, Inc. The plan concluded that:

The improvement and/or replacement of Lunenburg High school should be the next major capital project on the campus, based on its age and condition, inadequate space and capacity for science education, library, and technology deployment and education.

Projected resident-only enrollment in 2020 is 640, which exceeds the capacity of the building for modern educational service delivery.

New construction with demolition of the existing building would be preferred for several reasons: 1) lower life-cycle costs, 2) better educational product, 3) less educational disruption during construction, 4) needed field space would be gained, and 5) renovation would require costly mitigation of existing asbestos throughout.

In addition to regular maintenance, phased renovations to the Turkey Hill Middle School and the T. C. Passios Elementary School should be done over the next decade, particularly for accessibility and systems repairs/upgrades.

Significantly, also in 2007, Massachusetts began an entirely new way of partnering with communities in financing school construction projects. The independent Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) was created by the legislature and is chaired by the Secretary of the Treasury. The authority receives 20% of the sales taxes collected annually, up to \$500 million, to spend on school construction projects. Communities no longer decide what projects they would like to build and ask for funding. The MSBA process is quite different. Communities submit a *Statement of Interest* to the authority, which prioritizes them each year based on the problems of the school building. Criteria for ranking priority are established by the law, and there is no wait list; each year's submissions are re-prioritized. Communities with the highest priority problems will receive invitations to apply for funding. The MSBA will study the problem and work with a community's architectural planning and will determine what portion of the proposed project they will pay for. The Community must vote to accept or reject the proposed project. In the case of rejection, a community may either build a project on its own or start the process over with a *Statement of Interest*.

The Lunenburg School Committee and Board of Selectmen submitted a *Statement of Interest* to the MSBA in 2007 for Lunenburg High School. Lunenburg was not invited to apply for funding. The *Statement of Interest* was placed into a category of study for "Regional Solution". The School Committee and the School Regionalization Planning Committee, established by the 2007 Annual Town Meeting, are presently conducting discussions with MSBA about what this actually means for Lunenburg.

*The above report was prepared by the School Committee to sum up the course of study and processes for the planning of the next necessary school project to maintain a level of support for the children of Lunenburg.*

### **3. Expansion of Library and Construction of a Public Safety Facility**

The Lunenburg Public Library was constructed at 1023 Massachusetts Avenue and opened on December 5, 2005.

The Lunenburg Public Safety Building was constructed at 655 Massachusetts Avenue and opened on December 13, 2005.

### **4. Construction and/or Renovation of Buildings for Town Administration Needs**

The 2005 update report noted that four adhoc committees (29 persons from Town Boards, Committees, Commissions and Citizens-at Large) were formed to study the Center with the re-use of buildings - focused on Town Administration needs.

The Data Study Committee studied the condition of all buildings vacated by new construction and included the present Town Hall. This committee included an architect, engineer, construction manager, and DPW Director. Their work included identifying the condition of the buildings and recommending the needed repairs along with a cost analysis.

The Space Needs Committee studied the space requirements of all the Town Governmental offices, presently and in five years.

The Parking Study Committee studied the present parking problems and the anticipated areas of future parking.

All three studies were presented to the Board of Selectmen.

The Fourth Committee was entitled Re-Use Design Committee which was to determine the best solution to re-use the vacated building(s) with the design of the Center as a focus point.

The status of the Re-Use scenario, presently under the direction of the Board of Selectmen through the CAFO, is formatting a plan to utilize the Ritter Memorial Library Building as an extension of Town Hall for governmental offices. The decision is to place Land Use offices in the Ritter: Planning Board, Board of Health, Building Official, Conservation Commission and ZBA. The Board of Selectman, Town Clerk, Treasurer-Tax Collector, and Assessors will remain in the Town Hall. Renovations to the two buildings will be forth coming with the work starting on the Ritter Building first. The (old) Primary School building is being addressed by a determination of the condition and evaluation of necessary repairs and renovation updates to the building and its facilities. A possible use for the Primary School is rentals from groups such as theater groups and art societies. Another use that could be considered is renovation for senior housing.

## **5. Construction and/or Expansion and/or Renovation for Highway, Park and Cemetery**

The Master Plan Update in 2005 noted that the Public Works Department be organized and housed together at a central location. The Public Works Department consists of Highway, Park, Cemetery and Sewer departments. It was determined that a study should be conducted to determine the need of space (or building) requirements and the location to provide a central operation. A plan of operation should be recommended by the DPW Director with input from the separate sub-departments under his jurisdiction.

The present status is that the Department of Public Works (DPW) is managed by the Director with the departments noted above and the addition of a Facilities Director. An ongoing review of space needs notes an expansion of office space and a structure to house equipment and provide a storage area. The area is being investigated as to what type of structure or expansion can be accommodated with needed infrastructure, such as a septic system.

The 2005 Master Plan review for the DPW also noted renovations to the Town Beach (under the Park Department). Renovations have been ongoing with interior renovations to be complete in 2008.

The 2005 report noted that the plans for expanding the North Cemetery and buffering the South Cemetery. There is also a notation to further explore the need to select a site to be held in reserve for additional cemetery land.

The status presently is that an expansion has been made for more burial space within the North Cemetery. Further expansion is underway outside the present cemetery boundaries but on property under the Cemetery jurisdiction. The status of the South Cemetery is still in review. Consideration is being given to options that will have to be considered under Zoning Bylaws. There has been a twenty acre purchase that will provide approximately eight acres to be use as burial space.

### **Open Space**

In the review of 2005 it was stated that Lunenburg's Open Space Plan must be reviewed and updated. The update has to be submitted to the State for active status. An active Open Space Plan qualifies for State Assistance on many conservation issues including self-help support.

The Status of the Open Space Plan is that currently the update is in progress. At the time of this writing it is approximately two-thirds finished. A survey for the Town's people participation is being presented to the public. The result of the survey will be part of the update.

The working committee's goal is to submit the update for the State's Review deadline of June 31, 2008.